

WILLIAM MURDOCH



William Murdoch was born in Gaswater Ayr., Scotland, on July 3, 1825, to James and Mary Murray Murdoch. He was the youngest child in a family of eight. He married Mary Reid Lindsay in 1887, widow of Samuel Lindsay, Margret Lennox in Scotland. She died in Scotland.

His father died when he was six years of age and, like others in his family, had to find work to assist his widowed mother. His schooling was a short time in winter months between the ages of six and 13.

His first job was herding sheep on the bonnie heather hills near his home. He had learned to knit, so carried his work with him as he herded the sheep, making socks for himself and other members of the family. He continued this hobby throughout his 88 years.

At the age of 16 he went into the coal mines at Muirkirk and later became underground manager for the Eglinton Coal & Iron Works at Muirkirk. He held this position many years. In 1846 he was married to Janet Lennox, and to that union were born five children.

He joined the Church in 1876. All other members of his family already had joined the Church, except James D., who was in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. In 1877 they left Muirkirk and moved to Kilmarnock to make preparations to come to America. It was here that his wife Janet passed away. Her body was taken to Muirkirk and laid beside that of her daughter Elizabeth, who was buried there in 1864.

Letters of encouragement came regularly from his brother, John M., and a sister, Mary M. Mair, who, with their families,

had left Scotland for Utah some years previous.

In the spring of 1878 final preparations were made for the journey to Utah. David L. had married Elizabeth P. Thyne. They both had joined the Church and had planned accompanying his father. John Adamson, engaged to Margaret, also was in the party. Jennie, the youngest daughter, and Veronica M. Caldow, a sister of William, came along, too.

They sailed from Liverpool May 24, 1878, on the ship "Nevada." Without any serious trouble they landed in Salt Lake City at 9 p.m. June 13, 1878. They stayed that night at the Valley House and next morning were met by Uncle John, William Giles, and William Lindsay, who had come with teams and wagons to escort them to Heber City. It required one long day to make the trip. They made their home with Uncle John until they could find houses to rent. Their first home in Utah was a log room with a lean-to shack attached. It belonged to Thomas Giles. Aunt Veronica later married Mr. Giles.

About a year after their arrival father bought some land five and one-half miles east of Heber, on Lake Creek. He had houses built and began to clear the sage, fence the land, and put in crops of hay, grain, potatoes, etc. He soon acquired the American way of doing things and made a good farmer, considering he had spent over 30 years in the coal mines. He had some money when he reached Utah and was able to hire some work done until he could learn how to do it. He was able also to equip his place with stock and a few implements. He assisted in making the first canal to bring water to the Lake Creek area.

He had chosen America as his home and was eager to become a citizen. He worked hard to accomplish this desire and on March 18, 1884, received his papers and became a registered citizen of the United States of America, Territory of Utah.

In the spring of 1887 he married Mary Reid Lindsay (widow of Samuel Lindsay, with four children). They lived on the farm at Lake Creek a few years, later selling it and moving to Heber City. Here he bought 10 acres of hay land in the north field, and a house and about an acre of

ground in Heber. He had pasture for two cows, chickens, and pigs, and space for a large garden. He raised all the vegetables needed for his family and as well kept a few hives of bees.

A High Priest and highly respected by all who knew him, he was industrious and left a record for honesty and sincerity excelled by none. Although he was slow to accept the gospel, once he did he was perfectly satisfied of its truth and was ready and willing to defend its principles at all times.

He died March 12, 1913, at the age of 88. He was the father of eight children, five by his first marriage, four of whom came to Utah. Children: James D., David L., Margaret (Mrs. John Adamson), Jennie (Mrs. William Baird). He had three children by his second marriage: William, Louis, Mary Murray, and Lizzabelle (Mrs. Hugh Davis).

After his death and followed by the death of his daughter, Mary Murray, in November of 1918, his wife Mary moved to Idaho to be near her children there and her two sisters and a brother. She died there June 22, 1929, and was brought to Heber for burial beside her first husband, Samuel Lindsay. She, too, had led a long and useful life. As a child she had left Scotland with her parents and had traveled by handcart in the same year as our "Wee Grannie" Murdoch in the ill-fated Martin-Willey companies in 1856.